

## BOOK REVIEW

Douglas A. Campbell, *The Quest for Paul's Gospel: A Suggested Strategy* (JSNTSup, 274; New York: T. & T. Clark, 2005). xi + 290 pp. Hdbk. US\$130.00.

Douglas A. Campbell was prompted to write *The Quest for Paul's Gospel* because of what he saw as a lack of good strategies within this field of study. Consequently, he believes that there has been a lot of work, but with few results. This book is an attempt to introduce proper grand strategic decisions in relation to a constructive theological explanation of Paul.

Campbell begins by critiquing Beker's contingency/coherence theory and proposes a strategy of rhetorical and argumentative mapping for evaluating Paul's letters and arguments. Within this work, Campbell places primary importance on Romans and secondary significance on Galatians; however, he does take into consideration Paul's other letters.

In Chapters 2 and 3, Campbell outlines what he believes are the predominant approaches for the study of Paul's gospel: the 'Justification by faith' (JF) model, the 'Salvation-History' (SH) model and the 'Pneumatologically participatory martyrological eschatology' (PPME) model. In this section, Campbell contrasts these three models in terms of the similarities, differences, strengths and weaknesses.

Campbell specifically subscribes to the PPME model, which he articulates as reliant on pneumatology and narrative. The Holy Spirit is the 'key to the soteriological mechanism that lies at the heart of the apocalyptic model; not faith, or baptism' (p. 60). It is the key because the model is based on radical personal transformation that only the Creator can effect. Paul articulates this focus on the Holy Spirit in his letters through the use of narrative.

In Chapter 4, Campbell discusses Paul's use of narrative throughout his letters, and specifically focuses on Romans 8. In this chapter, there

are two movements: descent and ascent, with three actors: the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. By developing the narrative quality of Romans 8, Campbell then expands his perspective to other areas of Romans and Galatians. Campbell also incorporates Old Testament narrative discussion to discuss intertextuality in Paul's letters. This chapter is well-articulated and proposes a number of interesting possibilities for Paul's use of narrative within his letters.

Chapter 6 evaluates the ethical aspect of Paul's gospel in relationship to gay ordination. Campbell first discusses Paul's use of creation theology and his apparent adoption of a social order created by God. This is followed by a strong discussion of Paul's ethical centre in relationship to his understanding of Christ's return. Campbell proposes, and rightly so, that as Christians our best ethical option is to live as if Christ's return is not immanent, in order that we would live rightly in challenging unloving social arrangements. Although Campbell has a strong grasp of Christian ethics, he is indecisive regarding the issue of gay ordination.

Chapters 7 and 8 critically evaluate the JF model. In this concise outline, Campbell discusses JF's prospective construction of Paul's thought regarding the relationship between Judaism and Christianity. With this model, Judaism is inevitably construed as entirely negative in comparison to Christianity. According to Campbell, implicit within the JF model and its understanding of Judaism are a number of subtle premises that lead to some questionable logical conclusions about Christianity and salvation, including: natural theology, the justice of God, Christ and atonement, the nature of Judaism, conversion, and the nature of Christian existence. Although some arguments are stronger than others, Campbell does make a convincing argument regarding some of the shortfalls of the JF model.

Campbell continues by discussing the nature of πίστις within Paul's gospel. He begins his discussion by evaluating the use of πίστις within Philo, Josephus and the LXX in order to develop a semantic map that is not tainted by prior JF interpretation. Campbell concludes that πίστις within Paul's letters is used a majority of times in a substantive manner to imply 'faithfulness'. This is followed by a discussion of the PPME model's understanding of πίστις and how it is not tied to theological baggage.

Chapter 10 looks at Galatians 3 and Abraham's relationship to faith and 'the seed'. Included within this discussion is an interesting study of the difficult genitive construction of πίστις Χριστοῦ. Campbell evaluates

two different possible interpretations: 'faith of Christ' or 'faith in Christ', concluding that the maximalist and subjective reading of 'faith of Christ' best fits within the narrative framework. This conclusion, however, creates some problems for the JF interpretation of Galatians 3, which Campbell believes can be best explained by the PPME model.

Overall, one of the strengths of this work is that it is strongly theoretical but is still exegetically focused. Another strength is that Campbell allows the distinctive qualities of each letter to affect his understanding of Paul's gospel, while capitalizing on the force of Romans and Galatians. In addition, Campbell neatly lays out the logical developments of his ideas and has a real skill for seeing the hidden consequences of different beliefs.

One major weakness of his work is that, due to length restrictions, he occasionally makes blanket statements regarding some of his arguments. Admittedly, he does state that they will be forthcoming in different publications, however, this is not a particularly helpful method of supporting his current argument.

Overall, Campbell has a number of strong suggestions for the development of Paul's gospel. His PPME model takes a variety of critical issues into account and provides a thorough perspective on Paul's gospel. In general, *The Quest for Paul's Gospel* makes some important contributions to this field of study, and warrants evaluation by those on this quest.

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